

Federal Biobased Products Preferred Procurement Program (FB4P) Process for Industry Investigation

Designation Item

This section details the item that has been investigated for designation in the FB4P.

Item Investigated: Biodegradable Containers

Item Description: Biodegradable containers represent that group of products designed for use in food service industries. Products in this item are normally used by quick-serve restaurants, food management companies, universities and government organizations. Biobased biodegradable containers are typically produced from natural starch-based or synthetic corn-based feed stocks and are readily biodegradable through composting. Products in this item may be expected to comply with the specifications established in the American Society for Testing and Materials standard ASTM D6400, "Standard Specifications for Compostable Plastics".

Industry Investigation

There are four main sources of information used to gather data about items for designation. These include Internet search engines, the Thomas Register, industry associations, and biobased industry contacts. Each of these sources provides different results. The Internet search engines and the Thomas Register provide many results when a keyword is entered. However, when investigating products through the industry associations and biobased industry contacts, the results tend to be product or company specific. A lengthy, but thorough list of biobased companies which product the designation item can be developed best by utilizing all four information sources.

Internet Search Engines

When searching the Internet, each search engine utilizes a different algorithm to find related topics. To maximize results and ensure correct data, keywords are entered into several search engines. Primary search engines include Google, Yahoo, WebCrawler and Meta Crawler.

Search Engine	Keywords	Results
Google	Biodegradable Containers Deli Containers Food Packaging Rigid Food Containers Plastic Containers Biodegradable Food Packaging	www.packaging-technology.com www.chinapacknet.com www.genhydro.com www.economicallysound.com www.treehugger.com www.foodproductiondaily.com www.ecoproducts.com www.usbox.com www.indianindustry.com www.earthshell.com
Vivisimo	See Previous	www.biospherecorp.com www.dupont.com www.simplybiodegradable.com www.packaging-machine.org www.packagingnetwork.com www.e-containers.info www.packaging-advisor.com www.greenpeople.org

Alta Vista	See Previous	www.bio-tec.biz www.tetrapakusa.com www.cello-pack.com www.cee-foodindustry.com www.sierrapackaginginc.com www.weknowpackaging.com www.nutraingredients-usa.com
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Thomas Register

The Thomas Register, a free web service found at <http://www.thomasregister.com/>, provides a database of over 173,000 companies that can be searched by company name, product name or keyword. Each result contains contact information and may also include other useful information such as a product catalog.

Keyword	Results
Biodegradable Food Packaging	www.pacfoam.com www.interplas.com www.sigmasupply.com www.gulfpacific.com www.nswplastics.com www.rblindustries.com www.championplastics.com
Rigid Food Packaging	www.superiorpackgroup.com www.gageindustries.com www.chicagopackaging.com www.panoramicinc.com
Plastic Containers	www.assmann-usa.com www.flex-products.com www.tulox.com www.usplastic.com www.flambeau.com www.pioneerplastics.com www.fluoroseal.com

Industry Associations

Industry associations provide a good source to identify potential manufacturers, determine additional keywords for internet searches, and provide general descriptions of products within an item. Many associations maintain official websites with lists of member organizations and in some cases catalogs of available products.

Association Investigated / Contacted	Results
Biobased Manufacturers Association United Soybean Board National Corn Growers Association Packaging Manufacturers Association Women in Packaging Inc. American Institute of Food Distributors American Meat Institute American Plastics Council Chilled Foods Association	www.basketease.com www.brenmarco.com www.clearlam.com www.cool-pak.com www.intec-Alliance.com www.ppck.com www.packagingplusllc.com www.pwpindustries.com www.wilkinsonindustries.com

Contract Packaging Association Flexible Packaging Association	www.nat-ur.com
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Biobased Company Contacts

Company contacts come as a result of interaction with government officials, researchers, and industry representatives. FB4P staff follow-up on personal referrals or potential leads to possible biobased products.

Company	Contact Person	Results
Sho-Me-Container	Lawrence Den Hartog	PLA Container
EarthShell Corporation	John Nevling	Hinged-Lid Containers
Cereplast Inc.	Frederic Scheer	Food Containers

Conclusion

The results from the four information sources indicate that over 7 manufacturing companies in the United States are currently producing Biodegradable Containers that may be considered for inclusion in the Federal Biobased Products Preferred Procurement Program.